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Abstract

Long-term Outcome of Chronic Hepatitis B According to the New Histological Classification

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Background/Aims: Chronic hepatitis has been divided into chronic persistent hepatitis, chronic lobular hepatitis and chronic active hepatitis. These terms should be discontinued in favor of etiologic terminology. The activity of necro-inflammation and the degree of fibrosis should be evaluated for grading the severity and the stage of the disease. In this study, we sought to evaluate the long-term outcome and prognostic factors of chronic hepatitis B according to the new histological classification of chronic hepatitis proposed by the Korean Study Group for the Pathology of Digestive Diseases. **Method:** One hundred and eighty-eight patients (mean age, 35.0 years; male/female 3.9:1) with biopsy-proven chronic hepatitis B were retrospectively assessed with a mean follow-up of 80.6 months. The patients were divided into a biochemically-active group and a biochemically-inactive group according to serum alanine aminotransferase (ALT) changes during follow-up periods. The development of compensated cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma were investigated during follow-up periods. As well, the liver biopsy specimens of the patients were reviewed according to the new histological classification of chronic hepatitis (grade of lobular activity and porto-periportal activity, stage of fibrosis). **Results:** Lobular activity and porto-periportal activity correlated with the serum ALT level at the time of biopsy ($p<0.05$). The development of compensated cirrhosis correlated with porto-periportal activity and stage of fibrosis ($p<0.05$). The probability of the development of compensated cirrhosis, decompensated cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma increased significantly in the older age group (>40 years) and the biochemically-active hepatitis group ($p<0.01$). The risk factors for the development of compensated cirrhosis and decompensated cirrhosis were old age (>40 years) and biochemically-active hepatitis during follow-up periods. For hepatocellular carcinoma they were old age (>40 years), male gender and biochemically-active hepatitis during follow up periods by multivariate analysis. **Conclusions:** The present study suggests that the new histological classification of chronic hepatitis indicates hepatitis activity and the prospect for progression to cirrhosis in chronic hepatitis B. The biochemical hepatitis activity during follow-up periods is the independent prognostic factor for the development of cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma in chronic hepatitis B. Therefore, effective treatment to decrease hepatitis activity may reduce the development of cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma.

Key Words : Chronic hepatitis B, Grade, Stage, Cirrhosis, Neoplasm/Liver/Hepatocellular carcinoma

2000 2 23 ; 2000 6 7 ; 2000 6 15
Abbtrviations: CPH, chronic persistent hepatitis; CLH, chronic lobular hepatitis; CAH, chronic active hepatitis; CAH-BN, chronic active hepatitis without bridging necrosis; CAH+BN, chronic active hepatitis with bridging necrosis; CAH+LC, chronic active hepatitis with liver cirrhosis; HBV, hepatitis B virus; HBsAg, hepatitis B surface antigen. anti-HBs, antibodies to the HBsAg, anti-HBc, antibodies to the hepatitis B core antigen; HBeAg, hepatitis B e antigen; anti-HBe, antibodies to the HBeAg; AST, aspartate aminotransferase; ALT, alanine aminotransferase; ALP, alkaline phosphatase; GGT, gamma-glutamyltranspeptidase.

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 가 , fibrosis), 1(portal fibrosis), 2(periportal fibrosis),
 가 3(septal fibrosis), 4(cirrhosis) 5
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Table 1. Grading of Chronic Hepatitis

Descriptive Dx	Score	Lobular activity	Porto- periportal activity
None	0	No necrosis	< mild portal inflammation
Minimal	1	Sinusoidal lymphocytosis +/- 1 or less necrosis per 10x objective field	> mild portal inflammation +/- focal PMN in a few portal tracts
Mild	2	2- 5 necrosis per 10x objective field	PMN, focal in some or most tracts, or PMN, around <50% in a few portal tracts
Moderate	3	6- 10 necrosis per 10x objective field	PMN, around <50% in most portal tracts, or PMN, around >50% in a few or some portal tracts
Severe	4	More than 10 necrosis per 10x objective field, or confluent necrosis (zone 3)	PMN, around >50% in most tracts/septal surfaces, or bridging necrosis

Table 2. Staging of Chronic Hepatitis

Descriptive Dx	Score	Definition
No fibrosis	0	Normal connective tissue
Portal fibrosis	1	Fibrous portal expansion
Periportal fibrosis	2	Periportal fibrosis with short septa extending into lobules or rare porto-portal septa (intact architecture)
Septal fibrosis	3	Fibrous septa reaching adjacent portal tracts and terminal hepatic venule (architecture distortion but no obvious cirrhosis)
Cirrhosis	4	Diffuse nodular formation

regression, Kaplan-Meier grade 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, log-rank test, Cox's regression, p=0.05, Window, SPSS release 7.5.

1. 188, 3.9:1, 35.03 ± 10.10 (16-62), 80.60 ± 39.71, AST 92.32 ± 91.07 IU/L, ALT 161.32 ± 147.79 IU/L, HBeAg 141 (75.0%), 47 (25.0%) (3).

Table 3. Clinical Characteristics of the Patients

	Mean ± SD
Age(yr)	35.03 ± 10.10
Sex (M:F)	3.9:1
Platelet(μ/L)	180,580 ± 57,400
Total bilirubin(mg/dL)	1.14 ± 0.72
Total protein(g/dL)	7.19 ± 0.61
Albumin(g/dL)	4.18 ± 0.47
ALP(IU/L)	85.88 ± 32.19
AST(IU/L)	92.32 ± 91.07
ALT(IU/L)	161.32 ± 147.79
GGT(IU/L)	71.65 ± 55.09
HBeAg (+)	141/181(75.0%)
(-)	47/181(25.0%)
Prothrombin time(%)	85.24 ± 12.72

2. grade가 stage 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, log-rank test, Cox's regression, p=0.05, Window, SPSS release 7.5.

3. 188, 3.9:1, 35.03 ± 10.10 (16-62), 80.60 ± 39.71, AST 92.32 ± 91.07 IU/L, ALT 161.32 ± 147.79 IU/L, HBeAg 141 (75.0%), 47 (25.0%) (3).

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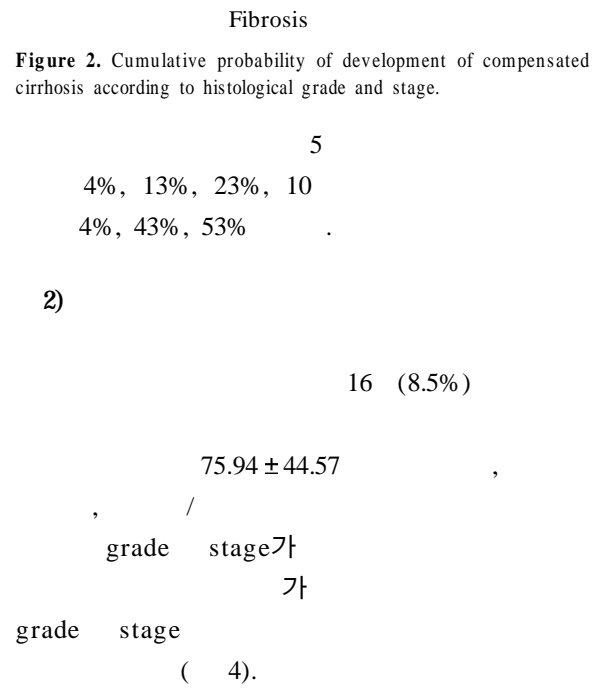
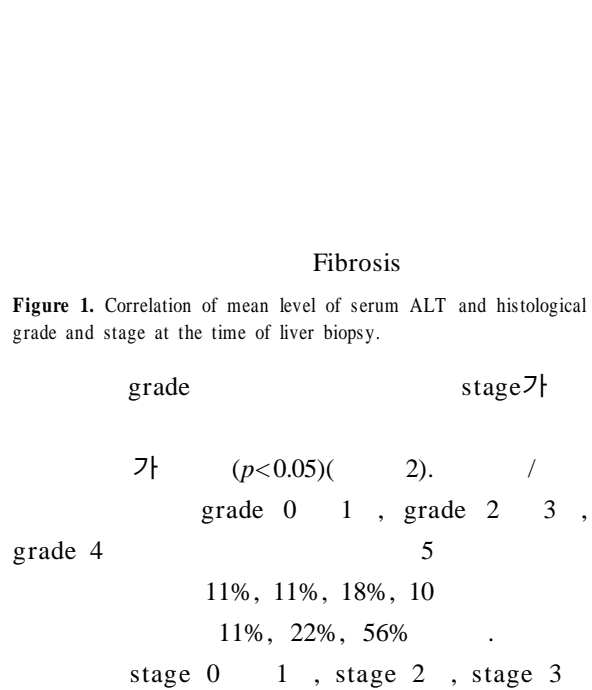


Table 4. Cumulative Probability of Development of Decompensated Cirrhosis

Variables	Grade /Stage	No. of patients.	Cumulative probability		p- value
			5yrs	10yrs	
Lobular activity	1	10	11%		0.192
	2	84	2%	15%	
	3,4	94	4%	27%	
Porto-periportal activity	0,1	10	11%		0.606
	2,3	67	3%	13%	
	4	111	4%	21%	
Fibrosis	0,1	28	4%	4%	0.860
	2	107	4%	19%	
	3	53	5%	20%	

3)

14 (7.4%) , 13 (92.9%)

106.07 ± 32.66

grade stage가

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Table 5. Cumulative Probability of Development of HCC

Variables	Grade /Stage	No. of patients	Cumulative probability		p- value
			5yrs	10yrs	
Lobular activity	1	10	0%		0.433
	2	84	2%	29%	
	3,4	94	2%	12%	
Porto-periportal activity	0,1	10	0%		0.322
	2,3	67	3%	11%	
	4	111	2%	27%	
Fibrosis	0,1	28	0%	0%	0.137
	2	107	2%	15%	
	3	53	3%	37%	

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119 (63.3%),

69 (36.7%)

(p<0.01)(3).

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40 (21.3%)

AST, ALT HBeAg

(p<0.05).

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18 (45.0%), 22 (55.0%)

(6).

Figure 3. Long-term outcome according to biochemical hepatitis activity during follow-up periods. Compensated cirrhosis(A), Decompensated cirrhosis(B), Hepatocellular carcinoma(C).

Table 6. Clinical Characteristics and Histological Grade and Stage at the Time of Liver Biopsy, According to Interferon Treatment and Response

	IFN Tx group (n=40)			IFN non-Tx group (n=148)
	Response group(n=18)	Non-response group(n=22)	Total(n=40)	
Age(yr)	31.78 ± 6.58*	34.41 ± 10.13	33.23 ± 8.71	35.52 ± 10.42
AST(IU/L)	122.06 ± 105.18	139.36 ± 89.64	131.57 ± 96.04s	81.71 ± 87.00s
ALT(IU/L)	224.94 ± 163.83	223.18 ± 133.16	223.98 ± 145.76s	144.39 ± 144.19s
HBeAg positivity(%)	100.0	100.0	100.0s	68.2s
Lobular activity	3.06 ± 0.54	2.86 ± 0.71	2.95 ± 0.64s	2.39 ± 0.65s
Porto- periportal activity	3.50 ± 0.71	3.59 ± 0.50	3.58 ± 0.64	3.27 ± 1.04
Fibrosis	2.17 ± 0.79	1.95 ± 0.58	2.05 ± 0.68	2.20 ± 0.78

mean ± SD; s, statistically significant (p<0.05)

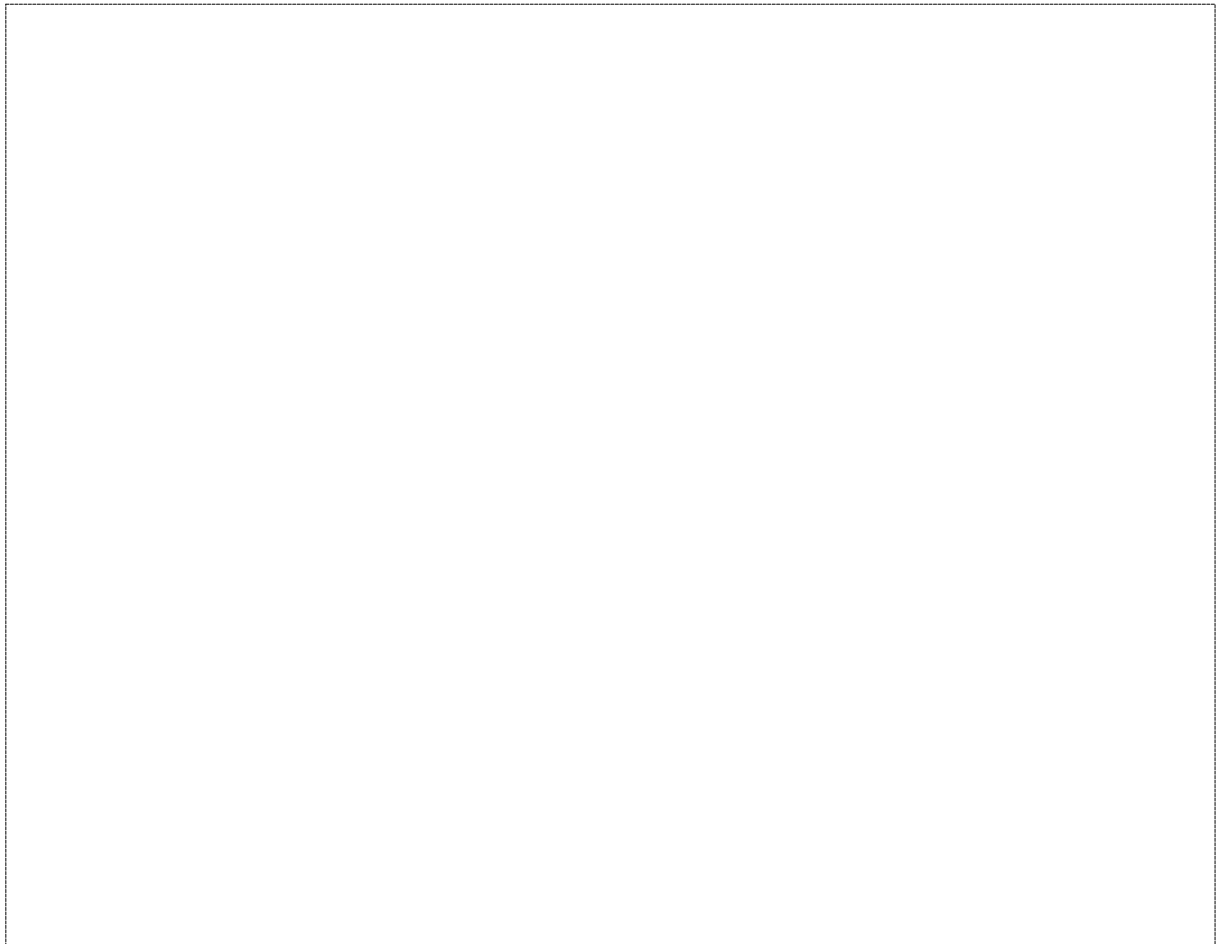


Figure 4. Long-term outcome according to age. Compensated cirrhosis(A), Decompensated cirrhosis(B), Hepatocellular carcinoma(C).

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Table 7. Long-term Outcome According to Interferon Treatment and Response

	IFN Tx group(n=40)		IFN non-Tx group (n=148)
	Response group(n=18)	Non-response group (n=22)	
Follow-up periods(months)	63.94 ± 34.74s1	61.59 ± 23.97s2	85.45 ± 40.89s1s2
Compensated L/C	1(5.6%)s1s2	6(27.3%)s1	39(26.4%)s2
Decompensated L/C	0	3(13.6%)	13(8.8%)
HCC	0	2(2.9%)	12(8.1%)

s1, s2, statistically significant (p<0.05)

Table 8. Cox's Regression Analysis for Risk Factors of Compensated Cirrhosis

Variables	SE	Exp() (95% CI)	p-value
Age	0.016	1.07(1.04- 1.10)	<0.001
Sex	0.394	1.47(0.68- 3.17)	0.332
Biochemical hepatitis activity	0.362	2.29(1.23- 4.67)	0.022
Porto-periportal activity(grade0- 3/4)	0.376	2.02(0.97- 4.21)	0.062
Fibrosis (stage0,1/2,3)	1.062	2.23(0.29- 18.85)	0.422

Table 9. Cox's Regression Analysis for Risk Factors of Decompensated Cirrhosis and HCC

Variables	SE	Exp() (95% CI)	p-value
Decompensated L/C			
Age	0.027	1.10(1.04- 1.16)	<0.001
Sex	0.615	1.15(0.35- 3.85)	0.816
Biochemical hepatitis activity	0.702	4.02(1.01- 15.92)	0.047
HCC			
Age	0.045	1.18(1.08- 1.29)	<0.001
Sex	1.273	23.65(1.95- 286.89)	0.013
Biochemical hepatitis activity	0.818	6.47(1.30- 32.15)	0.022

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